

**Zoning Public Hearing  
CITY OF AUSTIN  
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION**



**AGENDA ITEM NO.: Z-6  
AGENDA DATE: Thu 12/01/2005  
PAGE: 1 of 1**

**SUBJECT:** C14H-05-0025 – Miller House - Conduct a public hearing and approve an ordinance amending Chapter 25-2 of the Austin City Code by rezoning property locally known as 900 Rio Grande Street from general office (GO) district zoning to general office-historic (GO-H) combining district zoning. Historic Landmark Commission recommendation: To grant general office-historic (GO-H) combining district zoning. Zoning and Platting Commission recommendation: To grant general office-historic (GO-H) combining district zoning. Applicant: Carol Sims, Eidschun Partners, L.P. City Staff: Steve Sadowsky, 974-6454.

**REQUESTING** Neighborhood Planning  
**DEPARTMENT:** and Zoning

**DIRECTOR'S**  
**AUTHORIZATION:** Greg Guernsey

# ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

**CASE NUMBER:** C14H-05-0025

**HLC DATE:**

October 24, 2005

**ZAP DATE:**

November 15, 2005

**APPLICANT:** Eidschun Partners, L.P.

**HISTORIC NAME:** Miller House

**WATERSHED:** Shoal Creek

**ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE:** 900 Rio Grande Street

**ZONING FROM:** GO

**TO:** GO-H

**SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from general office (GO) to general office - Historic (GO-H) combining district zoning.

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION:** Recommended the proposed zoning change from general office (GO) to general office - Historic (GO-H) combining district zoning.  
Vote: 5-0 (Bunton and Mather absent).

**ZONING AND PLATTING COMMISSION ACTION:** Recommended the proposed zoning change from general office (GO) to general office - Historic (GO-H) combining district zoning.  
Vote: 7-0.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The house is listed as a Priority 1 in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984).

**CITY COUNCIL DATE:**

**ACTION:**

**ORDINANCE READINGS:** 1<sup>ST</sup> 2<sup>ND</sup> 3<sup>RD</sup>

**ORDINANCE NUMBER:**

**CASE MANAGER:** Steve Sadowsky

**PHONE:** 974-6454

**NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION:** Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association

**BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

The ca. 1899 Miller House is significant for its architecture, its depiction of the lifestyles and tastes of widowed working women at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and its association with the Miller family, prominent in the wholesale grocery business in Austin.

**ARCHITECTURE**

The ca. 1899 Miller House is a one-story wing-and-gable plan frame house with a flat-topped hipped roof, a projecting front and side gable with fishscale imbrication in the tympanum, a partial-width flat-roofed independent porch on the front with a spindlework frieze, decorative brackets, turned

posts and railing. There is a smaller version of the porch at the front of the side gable. The house has 1:1 wood windows and a metal roof.

The house is an excellent example of vernacular Victorian residential architecture in Austin. Vernacular (or Folk) Victorian houses were designed and built by contractors rather than by architects. They were intended as middle class housing, and employed various architectural features from the larger and more ornate Queen Anne style houses that were architect-designed and intended for the upper class. The house has a very traditional form in its wing-and-gable configuration; the fishscale shingles in the boxed gables and the spindlework on the porch friezes are relatively ornate, and reflect the tastes of Austin's middle class at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The rear screened porch was enclosed in the 1970s, when a new addition was built to connect the garage to the house. The metal roof was added during the same period.

The house is surrounded by a low, rock-faced wall with a concrete cap.

#### **HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS**

Mrs. Fannie Miller, the widow of Dr. R.W. Miller, purchased this property in 1898, and executed a mechanic's lien to the J.J. Brydson Lumber Company to build the current house. Mrs. Miller worked as a clerk in the post office and then in the comptroller's office in the early 1890s; her son Thomas Moss Miller worked as a clerk for John Bremond and Co. when Mrs. Miller purchased this property in 1898. Mrs. Miller died in 1913 and left the property to Thomas, who rose in the ranks of the Bremond Company, becoming manager of the wholesale grocery concern in 1924, and vice-president in 1932. His widow Cammie, with her sister and brother-in-law, operated the Miller-Hostetter Company, also a wholesale grocery company. Members of the Miller family lived in the house until around 1970.

The house reflects significant aspects of Austin history at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Fannie Miller worked outside the home as a clerk, and was able to purchase this property and build this house. The first time she appears in the Austin city directories, she was living in a rooming house. Her son Thomas worked his way up from a stock clerk to the manager and vice-president of probably the most prominent wholesale grocery business in Austin. His widow Cammie continued the tradition of wholesale grocery interests through her partial ownership of the Miller-Hostetter Company. The house reflects the lives of widowed Austin women at the turn of and into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century who worked outside the home at a time when most widowed women were taken in by their families.

**PARCEL NO.:** 02080011070000

**DEED RECORD:** Docket No. 2004140055 TR

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** Lot A, Block 105, Paul R. Hamilton Addition

**ANNUAL CITY TAX ABATEMENT:** \$691 (Income-producing rate).

**APPRAISED VALUE:** \$469,458

**PRESENT USE:** Business

**CONDITION:** Excellent

**PRESENT OWNER**

Eidschun Partner, L.P.  
2406 Rollingwood Drive  
Austin, Texas 78746

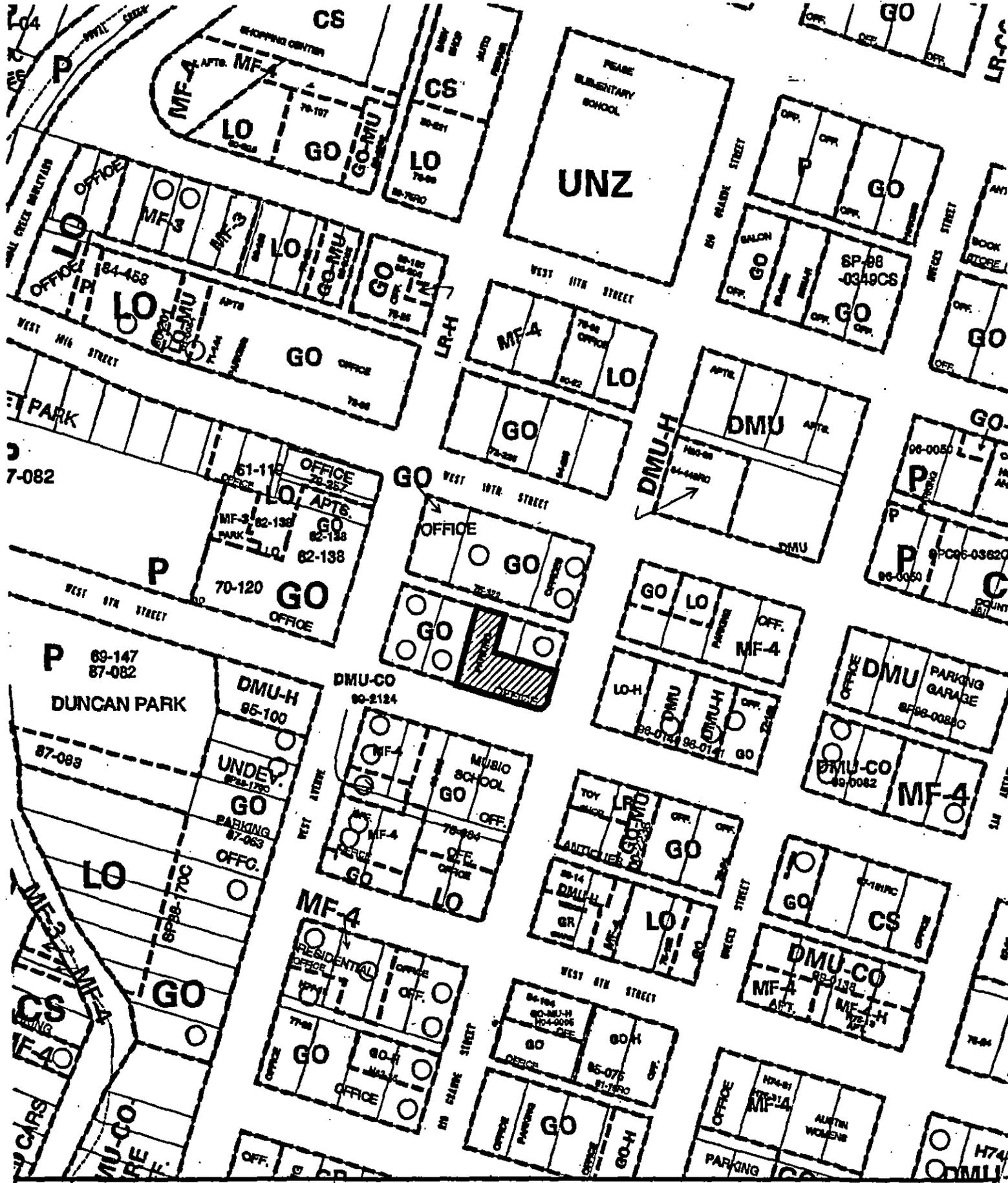
**DATE BUILT:** ca. 1899

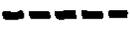
**ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS:** Rear screened porch has been enclosed; metal roof; addition between house and garage (1970s).

**ORIGINAL OWNER(S):** Mrs. Fannie Miller (1898)

**OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS:**

None




 SUBJECT TRACT   
 PENDING CASE   
 ZONING BOUNDARY   
 CASE MGR: S. SADOWSKY

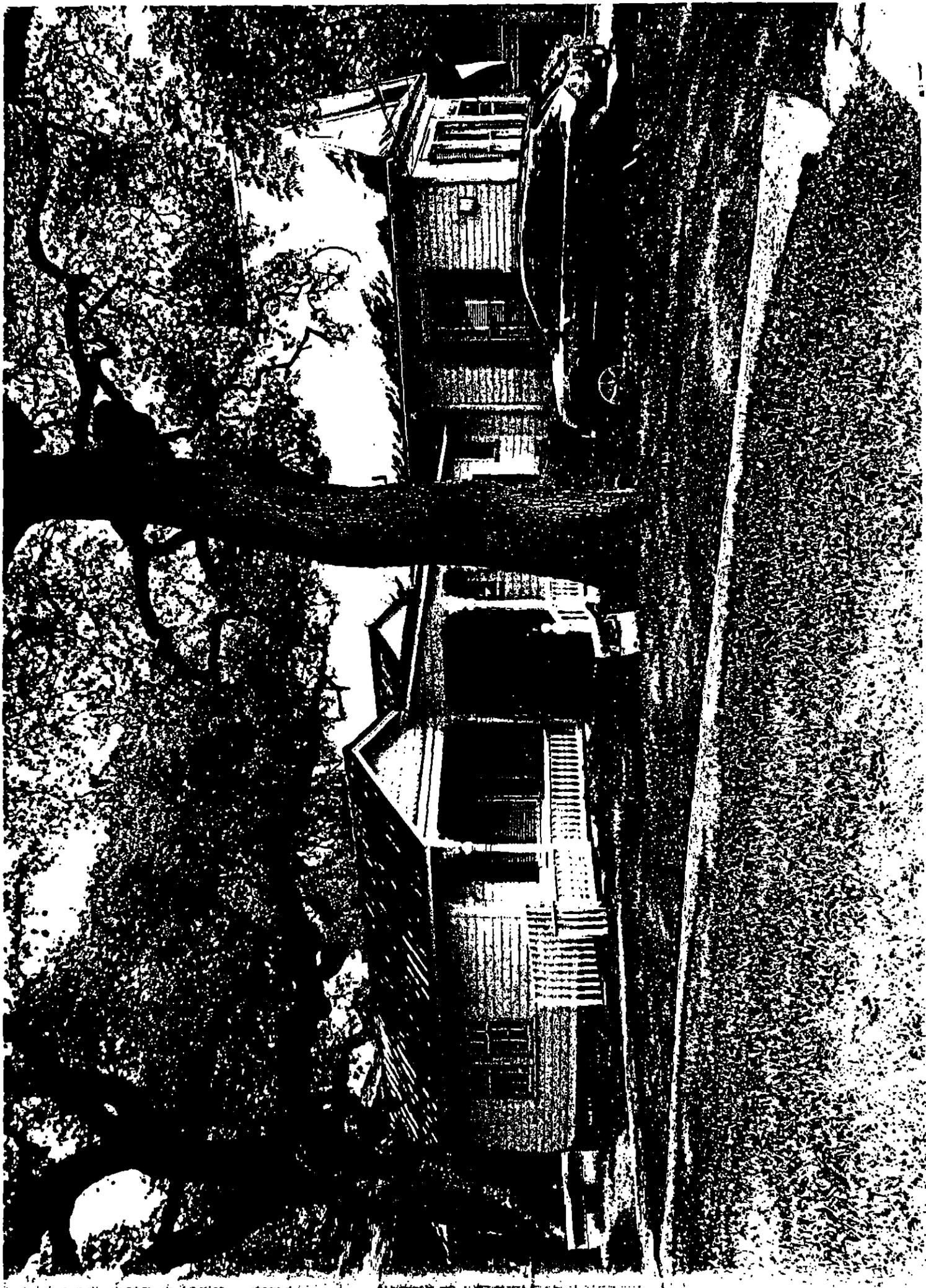
**HISTORIC ZONING**

**CASE #: C14H-05-0025**  
**ADDRESS: 800 RIO GRANDE ST.**  
**SUBJECT AREA (acres): N/A**

**DATE: 05-08**  
**INTLS: SM**

**CITY GRID REFERENCE NUMBER**  
**J22**







**Campbell-Miller House 1872/1898**  
900 Rio Grande Street

Thomas Jefferson Campbell (1832-1919) returned to Austin in 1865 following service in the Civil War with the Texas Infantry. His wife Louise Raven Campbell (1836-1910) emigrated from Germany in 1838 with her parents, who settled in Austin in 1848. Her father Ernst Raven established a bookbinding business and was an alderman of the city. Sam Houston was a frequent visitor at their home. Thomas and Louise were married in 1857 and had five children by 1869. Campbell worked as a carpenter for builder Charles F. Millett, who served as Austin's first fire chief. Campbell was an original volunteer with the 1870 Colorado Fire Company #2. In early 1872, shortly after the first train arrived in Austin, Campbell built this home for his family. He moved his carpentry shop here in 1881 and worked with his son Arthur until 1891.

The Campbells sold their home in January of 1898 to the widow of Dr. Robert W. Miller of LaGrange. Mrs. Miller remodeled the house, probably adding the high-pitched roof, a bathroom, and front and rear porches, giving the home its popular Texas-Victorian appearance with high ceilings, carpenter-gothic bead and spindle work, jigsaw ornamented brackets, turned posts and balusters. The windows sported the French Louisiana Bayou-style louvered shutters, and the unusual triangular fireplace opened to both the front salon and the master bedroom.

Fannie Moss Miller worked at the Post Office and in the state comptroller's office. Her son Thomas M. Miller lived with her and was a stock clerk at John Bremond & Company wholesale grocer, where he was a salesman when his mother died in 1914. He inherited the residence and later married Gamble Woods before becoming manager of Bremond & Company in 1924. He died in 1937, leaving the property to his wife. Camille died in 1970 and left the home to her sister Virginia Hostetter. The home was used for offices and as an art gallery after 1972 until July of 2004, when it became the new home of the Tea Embassy.

We welcome you to this historic home to discover the rich history and tastes of tea.

TEA EMBASSY 512-330-9991

OK to proceed  
S. Ladousky

# A. APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC ZONING 9-20-05

## PROJECT INFORMATION:

DEPARTMENTAL USE ONLY	
APPLICATION DATE: <u>9/19/05</u>	FILE NUMBER(S): <u>CUH 05 0025</u>
TENTATIVE HLC DATE: _____	INITIATED: YES/NO _____
TENTATIVE EC OR ZAP DATE: _____	ROLLBACK: YES/NO _____
TENTATIVE SC DATE: _____	
CASE MANAGER: <u>S. Ladousky</u>	
APPLICATION ACCEPTED BY: _____	

## BASIC PROJECT DATA:

1. OWNER'S NAME: Eldschun Partners L.P., Carol Sims, managing partner
2. PROJECT NAME: CAMPBELL MILLER HOUSE
3. PROJECT STREET ADDRESS (or Range): 900 Rio Grande Street ZIP 78701 COUNTY: Travis

## AREA TO BE REZONED:

4. ACRES 0.3012 acres (OR) SQ.FT. \_\_\_\_\_

5. ZONING AND LAND USE INFORMATION:

EXISTING ZONING	EXISTING USE	TRACT# (IF MORE THAN 1)	ACRES / SQ. FT.	PROPOSED USE	PROPOSED ZONING
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

## RELATED CURRENT CASES:

6. ACTIVE ZONING CASE? (YES / NO)	FILE NUMBER:
7. RESTRICTIVE COVENANT? (YES / NO)	FILE NUMBER:
8. SUBDIVISION? (YES / NO)	FILE NUMBER:
9. SITE PLAN? (YES / NO)	FILE NUMBER:

**PROPERTY DESCRIPTION (SUBDIVISION REFERENCE OR METES AND BOUNDS):**

**10a. SUBDIVISION REFERENCE:** Legal: Lot A Blk 105 Paul R. Hamilton Addition. [Originally Lot 4 of block 105; or, in the Hamilton deed, the South 1/2 of Lot #4; the east 46 feet of the south 1/2 of Lot #3; and the east 1/3 of Lot #2 and the west 1/3 of Lot #3, all in Block #105 in the City of Austin, Travis County, Texas.]

Plat Book: \_\_\_\_\_ Page Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**10b. METES AND BOUNDS** (Attach two copies of certified field notes if subdivision reference is not available)

**DEED REFERENCE CONVEYING PROPERTY TO PRESENT OWNER AND TAX PARCEL I.D.:**

**11. VOLUME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **PAGE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **TAX PARCEL I.D. NO.** #20041440055.TR (7/20/2004)

**OTHER PROVISIONS:**

**12. IS PROPERTY IN A ZONING COMBINING DISTRICT / OVERLAY ZONE?** YES / NO  
TYPE OF COMBINING DIST/OVERLAY ZONE (NCCD,NP,  
etc)

**13. LOCATED IN A LOCAL OR NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT?** YES / NO

**14. IS A TIA REQUIRED?** YES / NO (NOT REQUIRED IF BASE ZONING IS NOT CHANGING)

TRIPS PER DAY: \_\_\_\_\_

TRAFFIC SERIAL ZONE(S): \_\_\_\_\_

**OWNERSHIP TYPE:**

**15.**  SOLE  COMMUNITY PROPERTY  FAMILY PARTNERSHIP  CORPORATION  TRUST

If ownership is other than sole or community property, list individuals/partners/principals below or attach separate sheet. Eldshun Partners LP: Carol E. Sims, Robert E. Sims, Ann E. Shotmeyer Revocable Trust, Ryan R. Sims, Jonathan J. Sims, Benjamin A. Sims

**OWNER INFORMATION:**

**16. OWNER CONTACT INFORMATION**

SIGNATURE: Carol E. Sims NAME: Carol Sims, managing partner

FIRM NAME: (Tea Embassy) TELEPHONE NUMBER: 512-327-3782 work 512-330-9991

STREET ADDRESS: 2406 Rollingwood Drive

CITY: Austin STATE: Texas ZIP CODE: 78746

MAIL ADDRESS: carols@austin.rr.com

**AGENT INFORMATION (IF APPLICABLE):**

**17. AGENT CONTACT INFORMATION**

SIGNATURE: Phoebe Allen NAME: Phoebe Allen

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 512-444-1326

STREET ADDRESS: 2510 Cedarview Drive

CITY: Austin STATE: Texas ZIP CODE: 78704

CONTACT PERSON: Phoebe Allen TELEPHONE NUMBER: 512-444-1326

**DEPARTMENTAL USE ONLY:**

## C. SUBMITTAL VERIFICATION AND INSPECTION AUTHORIZATION

### SUBMITTAL VERIFICATION

My signature attests to the fact that the attached application package is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that proper City staff review of this application is dependent upon the accuracy of the information provided and that any inaccurate or inadequate information provided by me/my firm/etc., may delay the proper review of this application.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT NAME BELOW SIGNATURE AND  
INDICATE FIRM REPRESENTED, IF APPLICABLE.

Carol E. Sims                      9-16-05  
Signature    Date  
Carol E. Sims  
Name (Typed or Printed)  
Eidschun Partners L.P.  
Firm (If applicable)

### INSPECTION AUTHORIZATION

As owner or authorized agent, my signature authorizes staff to visit and inspect the property for which this application is being submitted.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT NAME BELOW SIGNATURE AND  
INDICATE FIRM REPRESENTED, IF APPLICABLE.

Carol E. Sims                      9-16-05  
Signature    Date  
Carol E. Sims  
Name (Typed or Printed)  
Eidschun Partners L.P.  
Firm (If applicable)

## E. ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

concerning  
Subdivision Plat Notes, Deed Restrictions,  
Restrictive Covenants  
and / or  
Zoning Conditional Overlays

I, Carol E. Sims have checked for subdivision plat notes, deed restrictions,  
(Print name of applicant)

restrictive covenants and/or zoning conditional overlays prohibiting certain uses and/or requiring certain development restrictions i.e. height, access, screening etc. on this property, located at

900 Rio Grande Street

(Address or Legal Description)

Austin TX 78701

If a conflict should result with the request I am submitting to the City of Austin due to subdivision plat notes, deed restrictions, restrictive covenants and/or zoning conditional overlays it will be my responsibility to resolve it. I also acknowledge that I understand the implications of use and/or development restrictions that are a result of a subdivision plat notes, deed restrictions, restrictive covenants and/or zoning conditional overlays.

I understand that if requested, I must provide copies of any and all subdivision plat notes, deed restrictions, restrictive covenants and/or zoning conditional overlay information which may apply to this property.

Carol E. Sims  
(Applicant's signature)

September 16, 2005  
(Date)

2004140055,TR

TAX CERTIFICATE  
Nelda Wells Spears  
Travis County Tax Assessor-Collector  
P. O. Box 1748  
Austin, Texas 78767  
(512) 854-9473

NO 120877

ACCOUNT NUMBER: 02-0800-1107-0000

PROPERTY OWNER:

EIDSCHUN PARTNERS L P  
2406 ROLLINGWOOD DR  
AUSTIN, TX 78746

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:

LOT A BLK 105 HAMILTON PAUL R ADDN

ACRES 0.000 MIN% .00000 TYPE

SITUS INFORMATION: 900 RIO GRANDE ST

This is to certify that after a careful check of tax records of this office, the following taxes, delinquent taxes, penalties and interests are due on the described property of the following tax unit(s):

YEAR	ENTITY	TOTAL
2004	AUSTIN ISD	*ALL PAID*
	CITY OF AUSTIN (TRAV)	*ALL PAID*
	TRAVIS COUNTY	*ALL PAID*
	HOSPITAL DISTRICT	*ALL PAID*
	ACC (TRAVIS)	*ALL PAID*
TOTAL SEQUENCE 0		*ALL PAID*
TOTAL TAX:		*ALL PAID*
UNPAID FEES:		* NONE *
INTEREST ON FEES:		* NONE *
COMMISSION:		* NONE *
TOTAL DUE ==>		*ALL PAID*

TAXES PAID FOR YEAR 2004 \$11,453.11

ALL TAXES PAID IN FULL PRIOR TO AND INCLUDING THE YEAR 2004 EXCEPT FOR UNPAID YEARS LISTED ABOVE.  
The above described property may be subject to special valuation based on its use, and additional rollback taxes may become due. (Section 23.55, State Property Tax Code).  
Pursuant to Section 31.08 of the State Property Tax Code, there is a fee of \$10.00 for all Tax Certificates.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE ON THIS DATE OF 06/09/2005

Fee Paid: \$10.00

Nelda Wells Spears  
Tax Assessor-Collector

By: 

# F. 1: Historical Documentation - Deed Chronology

## Deed Chronology for Campbell Miller House, 900 Rio Grande

### Transaction, Vol/Page

- Nov. 6, 1855 The State of Texas to Charles G. Keenan, Block 105 Lots 1,2,3,4 (fronting Ash) and 5,6,7,8 (fronting Mulberry). Lots are each 128 feet long, 69 feet wide. Abstract No. 1101 (1855), Abstract No. 1499 (1855, revised patent). Patent No. 672, Vol. 1, signed by E.M. Pease, Governor
- Mar 11, 1856 Charles G. Keenan of Walker County sold eight lots in Block 105 to Miss Mary Hawkins of Walker county, Texas, for \$800 (also known 1859-1895 as Mrs. S. R. (Mary Hawkins) Smith); Book K, page 316.
- May 1870 S.R. Smith & wife sold lots 1-4 to James A. (or P.) McKinney for \$750 gold; Book T, page 343, conveyed lots 5, 6, 7 and 8 to James R. Johnson; and in Book T, page 344 conveyed lots 1, 2, 3, and 4 to James P. McKinney
- Oct 29, 1870 McKinney sold Lot 4 and part of Lot 3 to E.T. Moore for \$650; Book T, page 594-5  
1871 McKinney sold Lots 1 and 2 and the rest of 3 to E.T. Moore for \$500
- Feb 5, 1872 E.T. Moore sells Lot 4 and part of 3 to T.J. Campbell for \$730; Book W, page 64.
- Mar 13, 1872 T.J. Campbell takes \$320 mortgage to C.F. Millet on Lot 4 for lumber and Material and work performed; Book W, pages 330-331. cancelled Nov. 2, 1872 by Millett.
- Nov 1872 T.J. Campbell takes mortgage for \$250 for "lumber, material and work" from C.F. Millett; Book X, pg 143-4.
- Jan. 1874 Campbell sells land west of house to Eugene T. Deats for \$600 to build a home; Book Z, pages 351-352.
- Oct 15, 1892 Campbell deeds house to wife, Louise E. Campbell for \$1,250, being part of the inheritance of Louise from the estate of her father, Ernest Raven, now deceased.
- Jan 1898 Campbells move to 2605 Wichita
- Jan 5, 1898 Campbells sell house and 64x69' lot to Mrs. (Dr. R.W.) Miller (Fannie), widow, for \$1000 cash. Book 141, page 70.
- Feb 16, 1898 Miller takes a Mechanics Lien to J.J. Brydson Lumber Co. (contractor) for \$1,200. Lien was released to Miller on 2/17/1905. Book 123, pages 616-618: Mrs. Fanny M. Miller gives a Mechanic's Lien to J.J. Brydson, who ... "agrees to furnish the labor and material to be used in erecting a one story frame shingle roofed dwelling house of six rooms and bath room with front and rear porch."
- Dec. 6, 1913 Mrs. Miller died. Left house to her son, Thomas M. Miller. Son Hubert C. Miller of El Paso County, conveyed his interest to his brother Thomas M. Miller for \$1000.
- 1937 Thomas Moss Miller died. Left house to wife Cammie (Woody) Miller
- 1965 Cammie (Woody) Miller left estate to her sister, Virginia (Jen) Woody Hostetter, who died six months later, leaving property to her husband, J. Sidney Hostetter. 4334/716.
- April 17, 1972 J. Sidney Hostetter, executor of the estate of Virginia Woody Hostetter, sold home (and 2 homes adjacent to this one) to Paul R. Hamilton, who restored the house and used it for real estate offices, \$44,000.
- July 20, 2004 Paul R. Hamilton to Eidschun Partners L.P., Carol Sims, managing partner. 2004140055.TR  
Campbell Miller House 9/19/05

## F. 2: Historical Documentation - Occupancy History

### Occupancy Research for 900 Rio Grande and related listings from Austin City Directories

Year	Occupant Name and Reference
1872-73	C.J. Campbell, carpenter, res. nw cor Ash & Rio Grande T.J. Campbell, carpenter, with C.F. Millett, Ash St. near Congress Av [typo] C.F. Millett, contractor and builder, Ash b. Congress and Brazos No R.W. Miller, although there is a Mrs. Miller listed
1877-78	Campbell & Deats, carpenters & builders. (Thomas J. Campbell Eugene T. Deats) shop s.s. Bois d'Arc, bet. Congress & Colorado Campbell, Thomas J. (Campbell & Deats), res. Nw cor Ash & Rio Grande Deats, Eugene T. (Campbell & Deats) res. n.s. Ash bet. Rio Grande & West Avenue
1879-80	Campbell, Thomas J., carpenter and builder, shop ss Bois D'Arc/7th bet Congress ave and Colorado, res nw cor Rio Grande and Ash No R.W. Miller or Mrs. Miller listed No Dietz listed Campbell is also listed on pg. 199 under Carpenters and Builders in the business section
1881-82	Campbell, Thomas J., carpenter and builder, r. Rio Grande cor Ash Campbell, Frank, carpenter T.J. Campbell, bds same No RW or Fannie Miller
1883-84	Campbell, T.J. carpenter and builder, r and shop 900 Rio Grande Campbell, A.B. carpenter's apprentice, home T.J. Campbell No RW or Fannie Miller
1885-86	Campbell, Thomas J. contractor, builder, res 900 Rio Grande cor Ash Campbell, Arthur B., carp T.J. Campbell, h. same
1887-88	Campbell, Thomas J. carp, builder, r. 900 Rio Grande cor W. 9 <sup>th</sup> (no A.B.) Miller, Fannie M. (Ms. Robert W.) h. Miss Ella Rust boardinghouse, 206 E. 12th
1889-90	Campbell, Thomas J. (same) Campbell, Arthur B., carp h. T.J. Campbell Miller, Fannie M. (wid. Robert W.) asst del clk P.O., h. Miss Ella Rust
1891-92	Campbell, Arthur B., carp C.F. Millett, r. 1205 Rio Grande Campbell, Thomas J., night clk police station, r. 900 Rio Grande cor W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Miller, Fannie M. (wid. RW) clk comptroller's office, r. 307 E. 11 <sup>th</sup> Miller, Thomas M., clk Graham & Co, h. 309 E. 11 <sup>th</sup> Graham & Co. Dry Goods, notions, 602 Congress
1892-93	Campbell, Thomas J., night clk police station, r. 900 Rio Grande (no AB)

- Miller, Fannie M. (wid. RW) clk<sup>tax</sup> dept State comptroller's office, r. 206 E. 12<sup>th</sup> cor Brazos  
 Miller, Thomas M., stock clerk John Bremond, h. Mrs. Fannie M. Miller
- 1895-96 Campbell, Thomas J., night clk police station, r. 900 Rio Grande (no AB)  
 Miller, Fannie M., clk. Comptroller's office, r. 404 E. 8<sup>th</sup>  
 Miller, Thomas, clk John Bremond & Co. h. Mrs. Fannie M. Miller
- 1898-99 Campbell, Thomas J., night clk police station,, r. 2605 Wichita  
 Campbell, Arthur B., carp Nalle & Co., r. es A&N W Ry bt E. 7<sup>th</sup>, Chincapin  
 Miller, Fannie M. (wid Dr. R.W.), r. 900 Rio Grande  
 Miller, Thomas, clk John Bremond, h. 900 Rio Grande
- 1900-01 Miller, Fannie M. (wid Dr. R.W.), r. 900 Rio Grande  
 Miller, Thomas, clk John Bremond, h. 900 Rio Grande
- ...
- 1912-13 Miller, Fannie M. (wid Dr. R.W.), r. 900 Rio Grande  
 Miller, Thomas M., slsmn John Bremond, res 900 Rio Grande
- 1914 Miller, Thomas M., slsmn John Bremond, res 900 Rio Grande
- 1955 Miller, Cammie W. (wid T.M) v-pres Miller-Hostetter Co. Inc h 900 Rio Grande  
 Miller-Hostetter Co. Inc. J Sidney Hostetter, pres., Cammie W. Miller, v-p; Mrs. Virginia W. Hostetter, sec-treas. 605 W 4<sup>th</sup>
- 1965 Miller, Cammie W. (wid Thos M) v-pres Miller-Hostetter Co. Inc h 900 Rio Grande  
 Miller-Hostetter Co. Inc. J Sidney Hostetter, pres.; Mrs. C. W. Miller, v-p; Mrs. V. W. Hostetter, whol gro sec-treas. 605 W 4<sup>th</sup> St.
- 1970 Hostetter, J. Sidney (Virginia W) pres Miller-Hostetter Co h700 W. 9th  
 Miller-Hostetter Co, whol gro 605 W 4<sup>th</sup>  
 Miller, Cammie, (wid Thos M) v-pres Miller-Hostetter Co. Inc h 900 Rio Grande
- 1971 Cammie Miller is not listed  
 Hostetter, J. Sidney, pres Miller-Hostetter Co. whol gro Mrs. V. W. Hostetter, sec-treas. 605 W 4<sup>th</sup> St.  
 900 Rio Grande, vacant
- 1972 Hostetter, J Sidney, retired, 5700 Cameron Rd.
- 1972 Hamilton & Assoc. 900 Rio Grande
- 1973-76 Hamilton, Paul R., real estate offices
- 1977-80 Ni-Wo-Di-Hi Gallery, Indian Artworks; Ted Pearsall
- 1985-89 Vacant
- 1990-92 Jewell & Assoc., lawyers
- 1997 Frank Jewell, John Nathan Stark, Nate Stark, attorneys
- 2000-02 Nate Stark & other attorneys
- 2004-05 Tea Embassy, Carol & Jonathan Sims, owners and managers

## **Campbell Miller House 900 Rio Grande Street**

**The Campbell Miller House on the northwest corner of Rio Grande and Ninth (Ash) Streets stands on a lot within the 1839 grid laid out by Edwin Waller, Austin's first mayor. Located two blocks south and five blocks west of the Texas Capitol Square, the house is about 750 feet east of Shoal Creek.**

**Thomas Campbell built the first known house at this corner in 1872. Widow Fannie Miller's Victorian home was located here in 1898. Situated in Austin's downtown business district, the property's history – as well as the history of the Campbells and Millers – is worthy of note in relationship to the development of Austin. The house itself is of interest as a local representation of turn-of-the-century Texas Folk Victorian architectural style. Because of its proximity to downtown Austin, the house has become of value to the Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association (DANA) as a historic structure, and it is already drawing tourist interest due to the location of a family business, the Tea Embassy, in the home. Its present owners take pride in their investment in a historic building and in its preservation. The house, furnished with antiques, is open to the public for educational seminars and catered afternoon teas.**

### **Architectural Description of the 1898 House**

**A mechanic's lien with Brydson's Lumber Company for \$1,200 indicates that Mrs. Miller either built a new home or completely rebuilt the Campbell house. According to the lien, Brydson agreed "to furnish the labor and material to be used in erecting a one story frame shingle roofed dwelling house of six rooms and bath room with front and rear**

porch." Interior and exterior details are similar to other 1898 period Victorian homes in Austin.

It is not know how much of the 1898 house might have originated with the 1872 building, but wide timbers on the west roof of the attic indicate the possible reuse of some lumber from that period at the least. No photos prior to those circa 1965 could be located. An 1887 bird's eye map shows the residence as a north-south linear shape in the style of a Cumberland saltbox. It is possible that the west roof could have been the roof of the 1872 linear building. It is surmised that if the house was modified rather than completely rebuilt, the two front rooms, bath, porches and rear kitchen were 1898 additions. The south bedroom, dining room, breakfast room and space between those rooms lie on the linear foundation of what would have been the 1872 house.

Stylistically, the one-story frame house is typical of other 1890s Victorian homes in the city. It has high ceilings, a bathroom, front and side porches (the rear porch has been enclosed), and a high-pitched, flat-topped roof with pent-roof gable ends on the northeast and southwest ells. An inset front porch with carpenter-gothic bead and spindle work, jigsaw ornamented brackets, and turned posts and balusters give the home its popular Folk Victorian appearance. A similar, small "smoking" porch is inset on the south ell; French windows open onto the porch. A triangular fireplace opens to both the front salon and the master bedroom and its Victorian chimney extends above the roofline.

Both wooden exterior doors feature hand-carved trim with inset glass. Front and rear doors, front transom above door, and door and window architraves are original to the 1898 house. The exterior is of white clapboard with shingle style gable ends.<sup>1</sup> The

windows, double hung with single panes, are protected by French Louisiana Bayou-style louvered shutters typical of the period.<sup>8</sup>

Wide, pine planks on the floors of the south bedroom are thought to be from the 1872 house. Flooring in the entry and living room is long-leaf yellow pine, and the dining room and east parlor/bedroom flooring is oak; these floors are thought to date to 1898 and are in very good condition, having been under carpet for several decades.

The Sims family has invested heavily in the preservation of the home by replacing the deteriorated cedar piers and sagging sills. They have restored much of the old home's character by refinishing the wooden floors and repairing and repainting the interior.

## **HISTORICAL NARRATIVE**

**Thomas Jefferson Campbell (1832-1919) and Louise Campbell were married on December 24, 1857, and had five children by 1869: Arthur, Frank, Olivia, Jennie and Addelle (a son). Thomas, originally from South Carolina, had returned to Austin in 1865 following his service in the Civil War as a sergeant with the Texas Infantry. Campbell first worked as a carpenter for builder and contractor Charles F. Millett, who served as Austin's first fire chief<sup>m</sup> from 1866-69. Campbell was an original volunteer with the 1870 Colorado Fire Company #2 and served as its "Recorder" from 1877-79.**

**Thomas' wife Louise Raven Campbell (1836-1910) emigrated from Germany in 1838 with her parents, Ernst (1804-1881), who had been a bookbinder at the court of the Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, and Auguste Mentzel (1809-1887) Raven. After five years in Baltimore, Maryland, and four more in Texas, the Ravens settled permanently in Austin in 1848 as early colonists of the Republic of Texas. Ernst Raven established his**

bookbinding business, was an alderman of the city for a time, and was appointed by the Duke as Consul for the State of Texas in 1861. Sam Houston, a member of his Masonic lodge, was a frequent visitor at their home, know as "The Ravens' Nest."

The arrival of the railroad in Austin on December 26, 1871, brought economic prosperity to Austin. The population doubled to 10,000 in a few years, offering Campbell ample work. Barely a month after the first train arrived, Campbell purchased Lot 4 of Block 105 and then took a lien to buy lumber<sup>lv</sup> from C. F. Millett, for whom he worked, to build a home for his family.

In 1874 Campbell sold the lot west of his home to Eugene T. Deats, who became his new partner at a shop on Bois d'Arc (7<sup>th</sup>) between Congress and Colorado. <sup>v</sup> Campbell & Deats designed and built one of the last remaining frame Second Empire style residences in Texas, the 1876 Robinson-Macken House<sup>vi</sup> at 702 Rio Grande, a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark and National Register Property, and an interesting example of the craftsmanship of the two carpenters and builders. The house is only a few blocks west of the Bremond Block Historic District and one block from the original home of John Bremond, Sr.; the Bremonds and Robinsons<sup>vii</sup> were related by three marriages among the families.

In November of 1877, Deats, also a volunteer firefighter, was injured in a fire at the blind asylum and died six months later—the first in Austin to die from injuries<sup>viii</sup> sustained in the line of duty. Eight days after Deats' death, the Campbells' beloved 16-year-old daughter "Ollie" died. Thomas continued his business as carpenter and builder, moving the shop to his home in 1881 (the year the Old Capitol burned down) and working with his sons Frank and Arthur. A second child, "Delie," died<sup>ix</sup> in 1885, also at age 16. Arthur

continued to work with his father until 1891, when Thomas, almost 60, retired from carpentry and became a night clerk at the police station.

### **Transitions**

It is likely that major changes came to the home, as to the city, at the turn of the century. There had been no electricity, sewage disposal, or garbage pickup in early Austin. Houses were lit by kerosene, gas lamps or candles; toilets were indoor containers that had to be emptied into outdoor "privies;" streets were unpaved. The Edison Electric Light Company began providing electric service in 1887. The current State Capitol was completed in 1888. The first dam on the Colorado River was built in 1893 but collapsed in a storm in 1900, leaving 22,258 people without light once again. (The Tom Miller Dam would not be completed until 1940.) Congress Avenue was first paved with bricks in 1905.

The Campbells sold their home in January of 1898 to the widow of Dr. Robert W. Miller of LaGrange. Fannie Moss Miller (-1914), who had relatives<sup>2</sup> in Austin, was born in Virginia. Both of her sons, Thomas and Hubert, were born in Kentucky. She is first listed in Miss Ella Rust's boarding house in 1887. She was a clerk at the Post Office in 1889 and in the state comptroller's office beginning in 1891.

### **Thomas Moss Miller**

Fannie's son Thomas M. Miller lived with her in the home at 900 Rio Grande and was a stock clerk at John Bremond & Company<sup>2</sup> wholesale grocer, where he was a salesman when his mother died in 1914. He inherited the residence and some years later married Cammie Woods before becoming manager of John Bremond & Company

wholesale grocery in 1924, vice president and manager in 1932. He retired in 1935 and died two years later, leaving the Rio Grande property to his wife.

**Cammie Woods Miller** and her sister Virginia, together with Virginia's husband **J. Sidney Hostetter**, formed the **Miller-Hostetter Company**, a wholesale grocery at 605 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Cammie died in 1970 and left her home to Virginia, who died ten months later.

**Sidney Hostetter** retired and sold the home in 1972 to **Paul R. Hamilton**, who renovated the house and used it for his real estate offices and a variety of tenants that included attorneys. Hamilton updated the wiring, plumbing and HVAC systems, added a metal roof, and adapted the building for office use by enclosing a rear screened porch and the garage, which he adjoined to the house. Hamilton repeated elements from the original house – interior window surrounds, exterior posts and balusters – in the additions. Hamilton sold the property to the present owner, **Carol Sims**, in 2004.

#### **Carol and Jonathan Sims & the Tea Embassy**

A tea company based in Austin, the Tea Embassy began as a simple hobby and transformed into a small family business. **Carol Sims**, a longtime tea drinker, entrepreneur and artist, began her journey with tea while in college. In 2001 she developed **Tea Treasures**, an internet business that sells bone china teapots, specialty teas, tea accoutrements, and her own cookbook, *Tea Treasures & More*. In 2003 her son **Jonathan** joined the business and they began searching for a place in Austin to share their passion for tea. Tea Embassy opened its doors in November of 2004 in Austin's downtown business district in the **Campbell Miller House**.

**The Sims family's mission is "to encourage all generations, genders and cultures to experience the wonders and history of tea together" in the relaxing atmosphere and comfortable setting of this heritage property. Educational events, seminars and catered afternoon teas are held periodically in the home, which is furnished with antiques. Tea Embassy sells products through its website, [www.teatreasurers.com](http://www.teatreasurers.com), and provides information about their events at [www.teaembassy.com](http://www.teaembassy.com).**

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Gable finials were found under the house in the early 1960s.

<sup>2</sup> The shutters are closed in the 1965 and 1971 photos.

<sup>3</sup> Barkley, Mary Starr. *History of Travis County & Austin 1839-1899*. Steck Co, Austin 1963, pg. 233, 239.

<sup>4</sup> Mechanics liens from partner C.F. Millett for \$570 for lumber and materials. See Deed Chain.

<sup>5</sup> Austin City Directory, 1877-78.

<sup>6</sup> Robinson-Macken House, Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, 1986, Texas Historic Commission, prepared by Duncan; National Register of Historic Places, 1985. Austin History Center files for 702 Rio Grande.

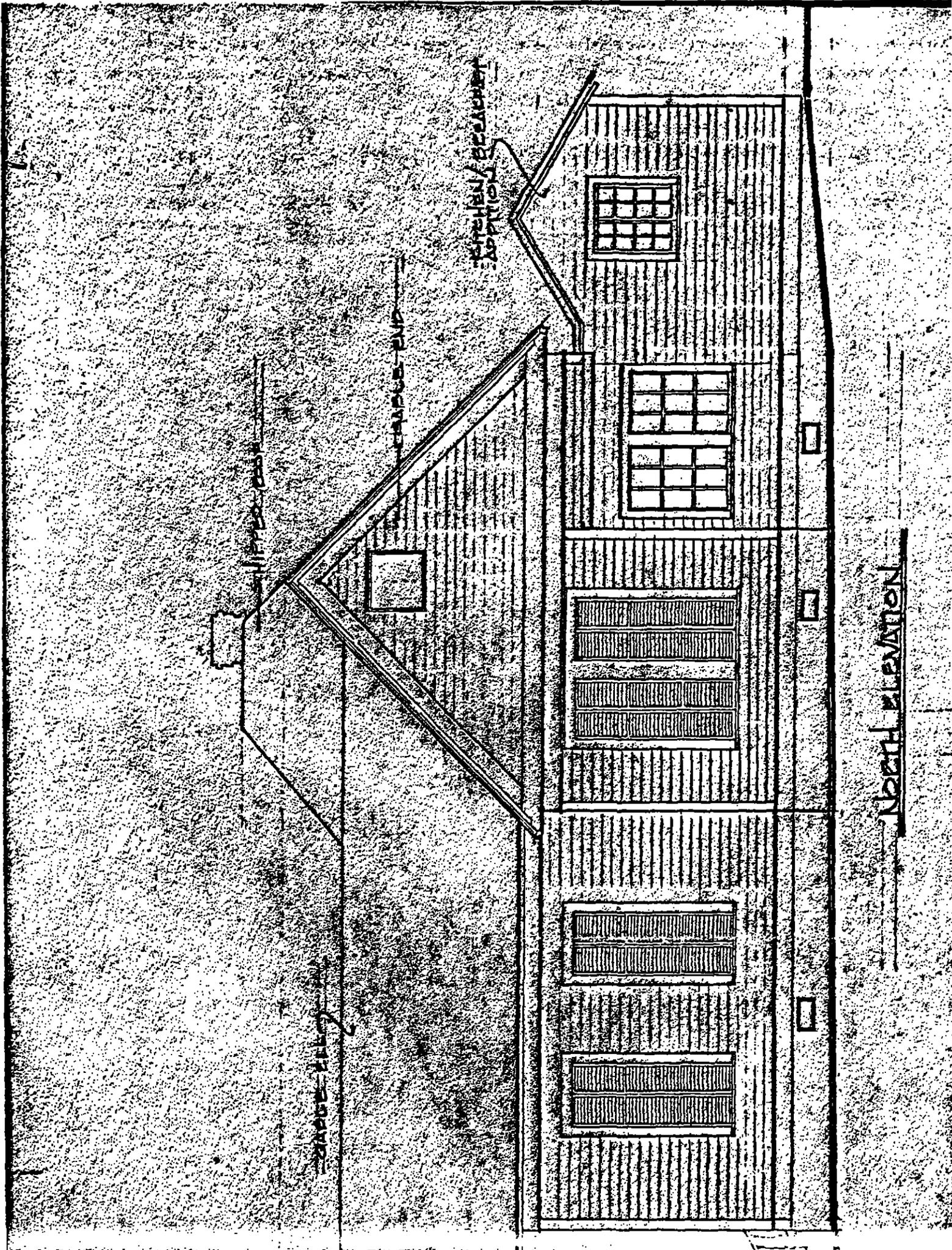
<sup>7</sup> John A. Robinson Sr. served Austin as a member of the City Council (1860-62, 1871-75), a director of the Austin Graded School (1876), volunteer fireman (1858, 1868) and fire chief (1870).

<sup>8</sup> Barkley, Mary Starr. *History of Travis County & Austin 1839-1899*, p. 235, and records in the Austin Fire Department Museum.

<sup>9</sup> Daily Democratic Statesman, May 30, 1878. page 4, column 2.

<sup>10</sup> Daily Democratic Statesman, 19, 4:3; 1878. "Doctor Miller's wife of LaGrange visiting relatives here."

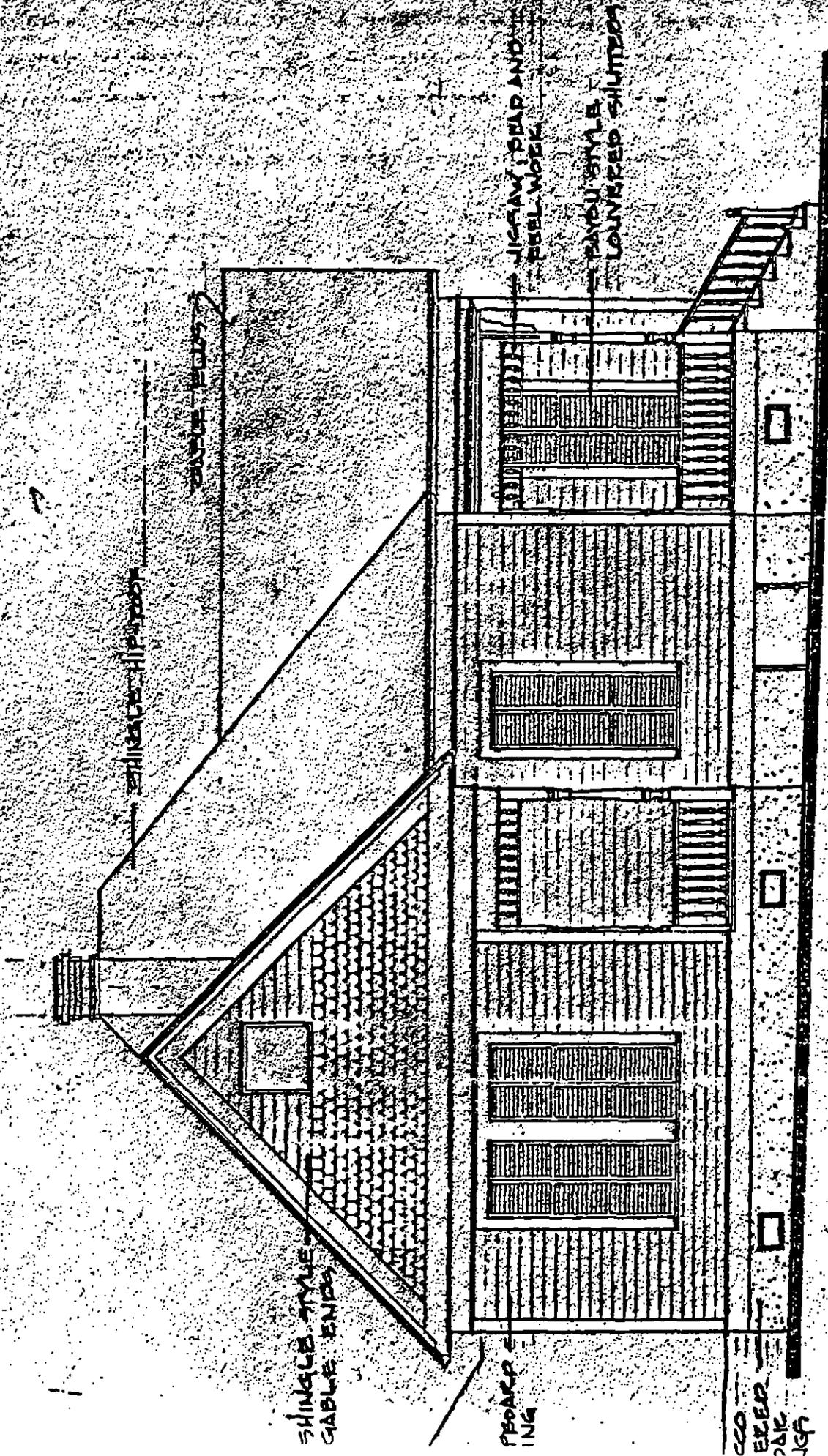
<sup>11</sup> New York native John Bremond (1813-1866) built a dry goods store on Sixth Street just east of Congress Avenue as early as 1847. His sons Eugene and John, Jr., both of whom are associated with the Bremond Block Historic District, joined him as business partners in John Bremond & Company in 1865. After their father's death the next year, the sons continued the business. In a back room of the store, Eugene operated a private loan operation that would become the State National Bank. The Bremond store shifted to wholesale operations after the railroad came to Austin in 1871. In 1905, it became one of the early companies to roast, grind and distribute its own coffee, eventually shipping its products across the state. The business moved a few blocks away in 1924, and finally closed its doors in 1967.



KITCHEN/BREAKFAST

GARAGE END

NORTH ELEVATION



SHINGLES STYLE GABLE ENDS

BOARDING

SHINGLES STYLE GABLE ENDS

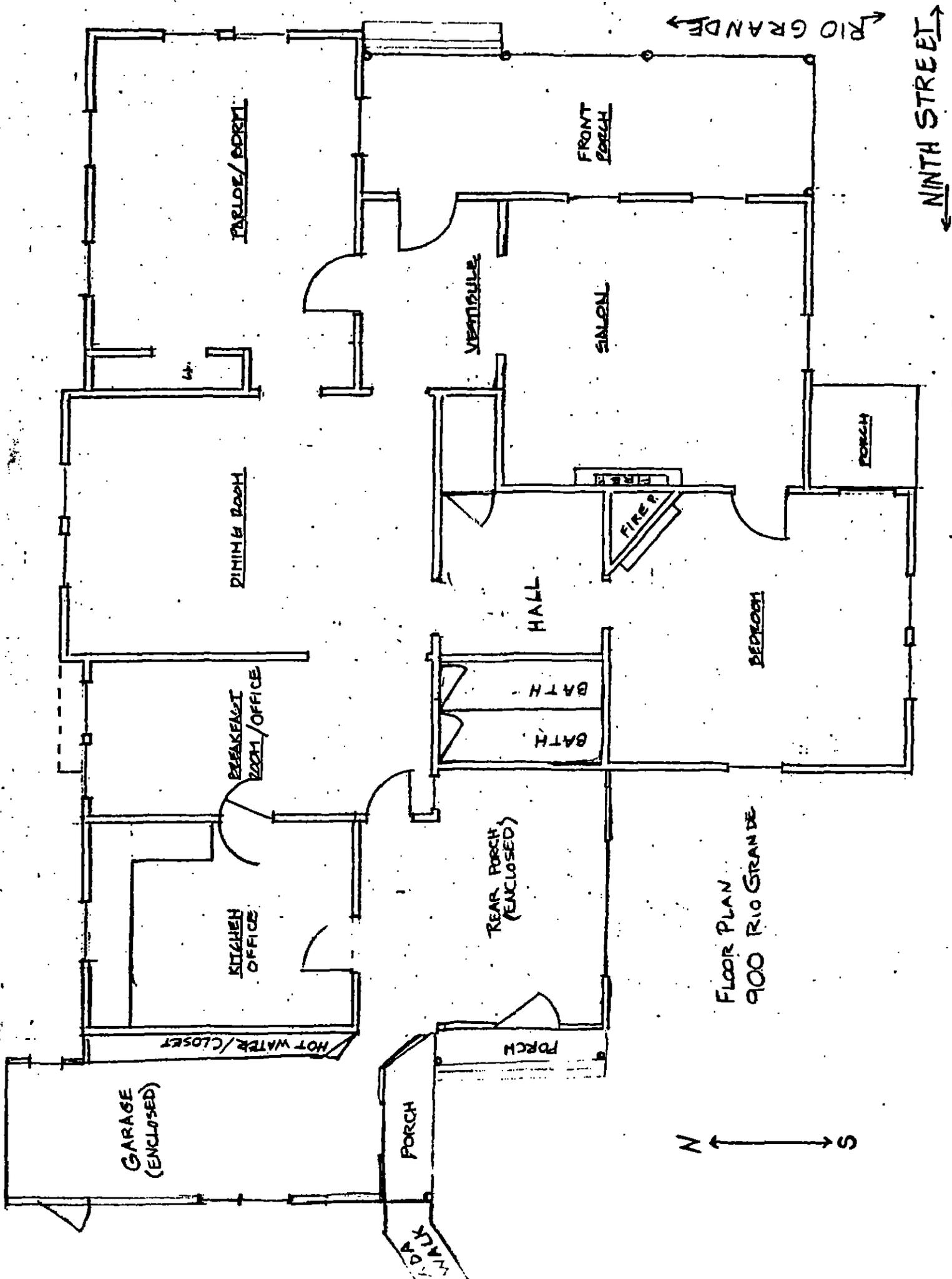
BOARDING

JIGSAW DEAP AND PEBBLE WORK

PAYSU STYLE LOUVERED SHUTTERS

SOUTH ELEVATION

1975 J. ARNO & P. TERRELL  
 CT. Student Drawings



FLOOR PLAN  
900 RIO GRANDE